



INFORMATION FOR IMMIGRANT VISA APPLICANTS

Immigrant Visa Unit, American Consulate General, Chennai

You have received a letter scheduling an appointment for you to come to the American Consulate General in Chennai and formally apply for an immigrant visa. All members of your family immigrating with you must appear with you for the appointment. Each person immigrating, regardless of age, requires a separate visa. If you cannot keep your visa appointment, please notify this office by telephone at 044-2857-4242, or by e-mail at ChennaiIV@state.gov. **If you cannot keep your scheduled visa appointment, you will experience a lengthy delay before another appointment can be granted.**

BEFORE COMING FOR YOUR VISA INTERVIEW YOU MUST CONTACT THE NEAREST VFS OFFICE WITH YOUR APPOINTMENT LETTER AND PAY A COURIER FEE OF RS. 387/- FOR EACH APPLICANT. YOU MUST PAY THE COURIER CHARGES AT A VFS OFFICE **NO EARLIER THAN FIFTEEN (15) WORKING DAYS AND NO LESS THAN THREE (3) DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR VISA INTERVIEW.**

You must submit your original passport, your VFS fee receipt and your original appointment letter at the time of your visa interview at the American Consulate General in Chennai, India.

NO ASSURANCE THAT VISA WILL BE ISSUED: No assurance can be given in advance that a visa will be issued. A consular officer can make a decision only after your visa application and all documents are reviewed, and you have been personally interviewed. You are advised not to make any travel arrangements, and not to dispose of your property or give up your job until the visa has been issued. If your visa application is refused, you will be given a refusal sheet that indicates the basis for the refusal. This sheet should tell you what actions you may take to overcome the refusal. If your application is approved, the visa is affixed inside your passport. VFS then ensures that the passport is delivered to the visa holder by courier, along with a sealed envelope that must be hand carried, UNOPENED, to the United States and submitted to an immigration inspector at the U.S. port of entry. The VFS delivery process typically takes up to a week. For faster service please make arrangements directly with VFS. **If the sealed envelope is opened prior to arrival in the United States, the immigrant visa fee of**

\$400 must be paid again at the American Consulate General in Chennai, and a new sealed envelope will then be handed over to the applicant.

VISA VALIDITY: An immigrant visa is valid for a maximum period of six months from the date of issuance. You must travel and apply for admission to the United States within that six month period. A visa may not be transferred from one person to another, or used by any person other than the one to whom it is issued.

ABANDONED APPLICATIONS: Section 203(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act requires that an intending immigrant pursue his/her visa application within one year of the date he/she is informed that it is possible to do so. If you fail to do so within one year from the date of your interview, your application and any visa petition approved for you will be canceled.

Security regulations at the American Consulate General in Chennai do not permit the following items to be carried into the Consulate:

- All battery operated or electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, digital diaries, pagers, cameras, audio/video cassettes, compact discs, MP3s, floppies, laptops, palm pilots or portable music players;
- Sealed envelopes or packages;
- Cigarettes/cigars/match boxes/lighters;
- Travel bags/backpacks/briefcases/suitcases;
- Cosmetics, food items, bottles or juice cartons;
- Any sharp object such as scissors, pen knives or nail files.

The above list is not definitive. Other items may be prohibited at the discretion of the security staff. There is no facility at the Consulate General to store prohibited items. Please note: Infant feeding bottles and baby food are generally allowed.